The programmes are being constantly reviewed to improve implementation. Attention is also being given to increasing public awareness through information, education and communication activities.

Health Officers at Ports and Airports

4307. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM : Will the MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is a proposal to post Port Health Officers at airports and ports to check the standard of edible items being imported for human consumption;

(b) if so, the functions of these officers and how they are proposed to be placed vis-a-vis customs officials; and

(c) the factors justifying the need for introduction of a separate cadre of Port Health Officers (PHOs) ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM) : (a) and (b) The Port Health Officers/Airport Health Officers are already posted at Ports/Airports respectively and are required to assist the custom officers as and when required under section 151(b) of the customs Act 1962 for checking the fitness of edible items being imported for human consumption.

(b) There is no separate cadre of Port Health Officers. Doctors of the Central Health Services are posted as Port Health Officers.

Popularity of Herbal Medicines

4308. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Times of India dated 6th April, 2000 under the caption "Indian Medicine Systems gaining ground";

(b) if so, the reaction thereof;

(c) whether any authentic survey has been conducted so far to assess popularity of the Indian herbal medicines in the global market and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps are proposed to be taken to promote Indian Medicines, in collaboration, if necessary, with Indian industries ?